

purpose

Your business has *value*. As a business owner you know that it is **very** important that all parts of your business contribute to your bottom line. From a business plan for how your business can grow, to orderly and well-lit aisles stocked with merchandise that attracts new customers, to an exciting storefront, your business makes a difference! As the first point of contact with your business, your storefront and those of your neighboring business owners define the character of your business district and as a group should attract new customers and sales.

The District and residents see the potential for your neighborhood business to thrive.

Your storefront image is critical to advertising quality and diversity in both your business and neighborhood district.

Through Strategic Neighborhood Action Planning and “reSTORE DC”, the city’s commercial revitalization initiative, a majority of the city’s 39 neighborhood clusters and represented stakeholders stressed the need to enhance the District’s retail climate so that needed services and desirable retail / entertainment amenities are provided. Residents have generated increased value in the District’s neighborhoods, but are continually concerned about retail areas that appear blighted, undercapitalized and marginal. District consumers are increasingly tired of commuting to surrounding jurisdictions to purchase quality goods and for services and entertainment.

The District and residents see the potential for your neighborhood business to **thrive**. These guidelines were developed to assist asset managers like you in making smart design decisions about investing in the exterior image of your commercial or retail property. This document was constructed while working with other District-based small business owners and managers like you and is based on the best practices used in similar cities where the local government also values maintaining and encouraging the growth of businesses that compete to survive and win.

Guidelines are already in place for commercial storefront improvements, outdoor seating areas and commercial signs on historic buildings or in historic districts. The guidelines in this document are not to serve as a substitute or replacement for those guidelines, but rather are to be used by business owners, community development corporations, neighborhood associations, professional design consultants, contractors, government officials and others involved in making decisions about proposed storefront improvements on projects receiving funding from District Government. However, others may find these guidelines useful as well in helping to create vibrant commercial districts.



VACANT AND UNATTRACTIVE STOREFRONT



NEIGHBORHOODS ARE IMPROVING AS RESIDENTS CONTINUE TO ADD VALUE

objectives of good storefront design

Storefronts are highly visible components of the city's historic streetscape, with a rich variety of architectural styles and treatments. Variety adds value and is the key to making your business more noticeable and exciting.

While some uniformity may be helpful in reducing overall construction costs, business owners are encouraged to imaginatively explore the relationship of their type of business (i.e. restaurant, bookstore, office, flower shop, etc.) and how that type translates into a unique storefront treatment within your business district. For example, an insurance office is clearly not a jazz bar, and is clearly not a laundromat. Their purposes and operations (peak periods, business hours, etc.) are different. They need not look the same.

The most successful storefronts are those that:

- Work with the architecture of the larger building,
- Simply and clearly market the name of the business and the type of services offered ,
- Allow potential customers visibility into the store's well-stocked and orderly aisles,
- Contribute to a distinctive pedestrian and customer experience, and
- Uniquely enhance the overall business district's integrity and identity.

"Places" derive their identity from storefronts.



A WELL DESIGNED STOREFRONT COMPLIMENTS THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE BUILDING

JANDARA RESTAURANT (WOODLEY PARK)



TRANSPARENCY IN A STOREFRONT IS IMPORTANT
FLOWER SHOP (BARRACKS ROW)